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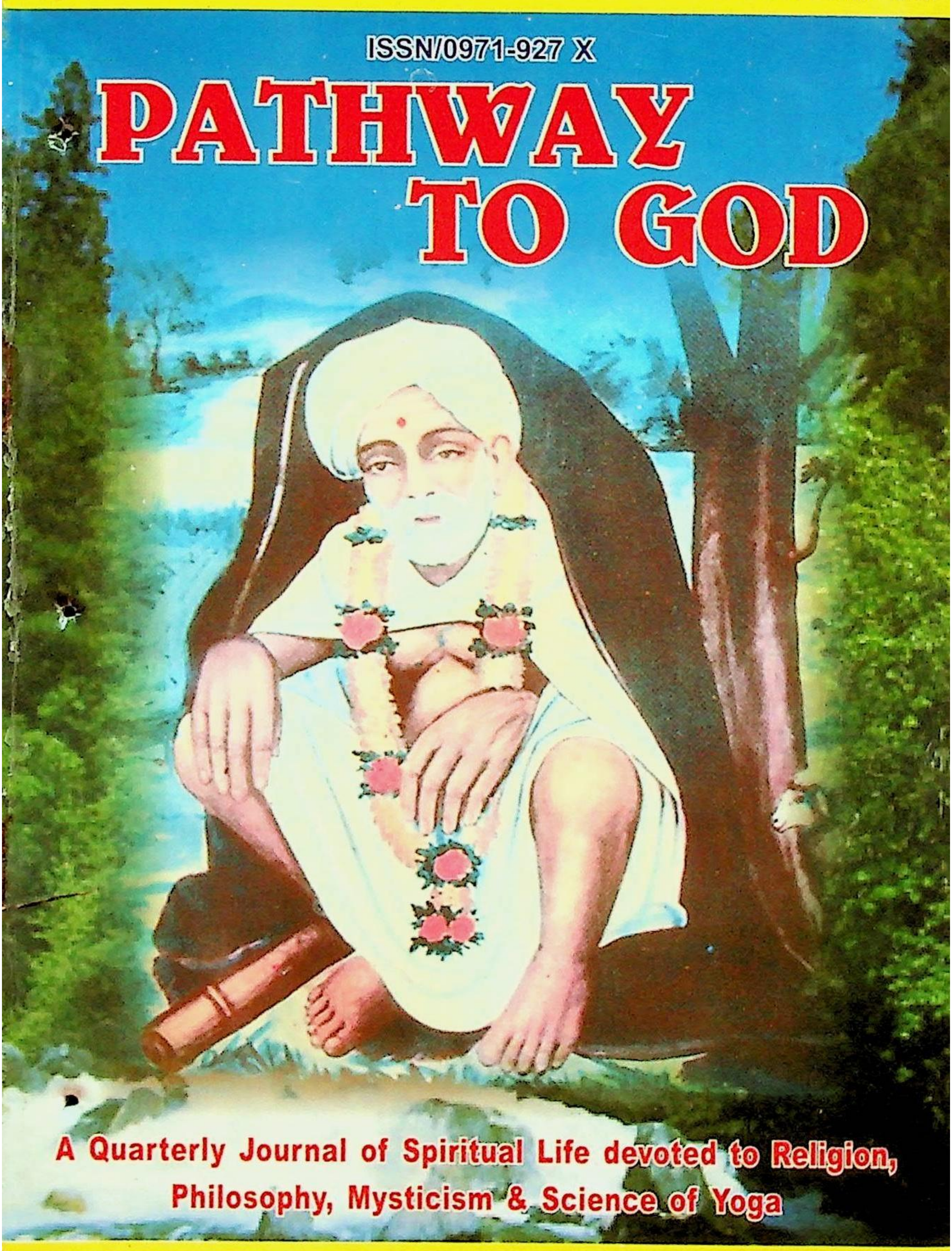
PATHWAY TO GOD



A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life devoted to Religion, Philosophy, Mysticism & Science of Yoga

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UNIVERSAL **FRAGRANCE**

(Straighten the crookedness of my mind, Oh God!)

ಮನಸಿನ ಮುರಗಿಯ ತಿದ್ದಿಸೋ ದೇವಾ !

- - ನಿಂಬರಗಿ ಮಹಾರಾಜರು

(ರಾಗ - ಭೈರವಿ, ತಾಲ - ದೀಪಚಂದಿ)

ಮನಸಿನ ಮುರಿಗೆಯ ತಿದ್ದಿಸೋ ದೇವಾ ॥ಪ॥
ಪ್ರಾತಃಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಎದ್ದು ಪರದ್ರವ್ಯ ಅಪಹಾರ ।
ಸಾಧುರ ನಿಂದೆಯನಾಡುತಲ್ಯಾದ ॥
ಸಾಧಿಸಿ ಯಮನವರು ಎಳೆದೊಯ್ಯುವಾಗ ।
ಸತ್ತೆ ಸತ್ತೆನೆಂದು ಮರುಗುತಲ್ಯಾದ ॥1॥
ಯತಿವೇಷವ ತಾಳಿ ದೇಶಭ್ರಷ್ಟನಾಗಿ ।
ಕಾಶಿಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಹೊರಟಿತು ಮನಸು ॥
ಕಾಶಿಯ ದಾರಿಯೊಳು ವೇಶ್ಯೆಗೆ ಮೆಚ್ಚಿ ।
ಕೇಶವ ನಿಮ್ಮನು ಮರೆಯಿತು ಮನಸು ॥2॥
ಬಲ್ಲವಗೆ ಆರ್ಜವ ಮಾಡುತಲ್ಯಾದ ।
ಬಡವರಿಗೆ ನೋಯಿಸಿ ನುಡಿಯುತಲ್ಯಾದ ॥
ಗುರುಲಿಂಗಜಂಗಮ ಚರಣವ ನಂಬದೆ ।
ಅಡವಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಚರಿಸ್ಯಾಡುತಲ್ಯಾದ ॥3॥

Gurudev's exposition on the above poem :

Now I shall proceed to another poem by the Saint of Nimbargi, *manasina muragiya tiddiso deva* 'take away the twists of my mind, Oh, God.' In this song, the Saint of Nimbargi prays to God to disentangle and straighten the crookedness of his mind. Human mind is very crooked.

He requests God to make it straight. 'The first thing that one does after getting up from the bed,' he says, 'is to talk evil of the good people, and to denude the people of their property.' Besides these two things a man always flatters the great, the wise, the rich and the powerful : *ballavarige arjava madutalyada.* Then again we entertain holy ideas only for a time, while we always pursue only the unholy ones. Probably the Saint of Nimbargi must have had some examples before his eyes. He says that when a person started on a journey to Kasi, he started no doubt with a good intention; but on his way he met a courtesan; he was caught up in her wiles, and forgot God. What is the use of simply entertaining holy ideas and doing unholy things? As the great Saint Vyasa puts it, people do desire for the fruits of holy actions, but do not do the actions themselves; they don't desire for the fruits of evil actions, but do them in all possible ways. So you should always be careful. When you will be caught up in the grip of death, your mind will suffer from qualms of conscience and cry remorsefully, 'Oh God, I am dying!' *sattesattenanta maragutalyada.* So before you get those pangs, you must see that God becomes your friend. Otherwise 'you will be merely wandering in a forest,' *adaviyolage charisyadutada,* without resting your head on the feet of your Guru. So he requests you to be very careful. 'Approach your spiritual teacher,' he says, 'and begin your spiritual life in right earnest; do not merely make a show of it.' In this way the Saint of Nimbargi requests God to help him to make his mind straight in order to follow the spiritual path.

❑

Musings of the Editor...

Hellow dear Spiritual Aspirants,

It has been always our sincere endeavor to present you every issue in such a way that it is at once appealing to the heart and enlightening to the intellect of average as well as elite community of readers. We are not unaware that certain articles are too exhaustive to be absorbing. We are trying our level best to make them more compact, inspiring to cover the entire reading community. We heartily invite such articles from world over which will enrich our journal and fulfil Gurudev's mission of global unification.

Among the five pillars of Nimbargi Sampradaya viz. Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, Sri. Bhausaheb Maharaj, Sri Amburao Maharaj, Saint Shivalingavva and Sri Gurudev Rambhau Maharaj. Sri. Nimbargi Maharaj is regarded as the originator of Nimbargi Tradition. It is 125th year of his death anniversary. To commemorate the occasion we have put his picture on the cover page and a brief life-sketch by late Shri. M. S. Deshpande, life member of ACPR, in 'Sri Nimbargi Maharaj (His Life and Teachings) by Disciples in 1978, published by ACPR, Belgaum.

* * *

How to achieve inner Peace?

A million dollar question indeed!

Say whatever you will, he is the happiest man who has gained inner peace. It has been realized by all the enlightened souls of the world that material objects and all human relations and bondage lead only to pain or at the most a temporary happiness. Hence almost all saints of the East and the West such as Buddha, Christ, Mohammed and a galaxy of Indian saints (Dasas) renounced these earthly, ephemeral pleasures aspiring for the inner peace.

There hangs a tale : There dwelt a saint in a dense forest. He was always in a constant communion with God. One day two thieves came running to him and threatened him to hand over the bag of gold he was hiding behind. The sage, immersed in deep meditation was unaware of all this. He heard the loud voice, the thieves yelled and asked him to show where he hid the treasure. The sage said that he did not have anything. When they started insisting, pointing at a nearby place under a large tree he told them to unearth over there. They did so and lo! To their amazement they found a dazzling garland of precious stones. One thief's face was aglow with joy while the other's was darkened with dismay. He asked the sage, 'if you could disregard such a precious thing, there must be something more precious than that and give that to me.' The sage replied, 'to acuire that you must sit here like me, renouncing worldly pleasures.'

But whether in the society or at home peace is something each one has to find for himself; it's not a commodity sold in a market. Man himself obstructs/disrupts the smooth flow of peace because his upper chamber is full of noise. His mind never lives in the present to enjoy it to the full. It rakes up the past, magnifies and re-lives all unhappy events thereof, worries about the future, aspires for material pleasures and when they are denied he gets disappointed, frustrated, embittered, lapses into depression indulges in murderous activities or kills himself. If our peace and happiness thus depend on external things the moment they mutilate, disappear or perish our peace and happiness too are disrupted. The inner peace that is disregard of externalities can alone be called as true peace, else it is only a tip of an iceberg, a top spinning around the same axis.

The only panacea for getting out of the mental clutter is to train the mind to focus on something as mind's nature is to glue on to something and if it doesn't get anything to stick to, it starts grinding itself which is a danger signal. So when we make it glue to the Divine Name it gets solace, peace and equanimity. George Herbert, a metaphysical poet rightly puts it in his poem, The Pulley,

'If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.'

This truth has dawned upon the great philosophers and sages long ago and that's why they could bask in the divine delight. It is said, the Greek philosopher Diogenes was once sitting under a road-side tree basking in the sun when Alexander the Great, returning from his recent victory happened to meet him. Knowing who he was, he fell at his feet and in reverence said that he was very much pleased with him and wished to offer him some present. He said, 'Sir, tell me what can I do for you?' Diogenes replied, 'O King, please move aside that will be the best gift for me. I am enjoying the sunshine and you are obstructing it!' The same philosopher always carried nothing except a small tumbler to drink water. Once when he saw a person drinking with his hands he was mighty thrilled, jumping with extasy he threw away even the tumbler he carried.

Thus peace, happiness, inner calm are not external things. It's inside us and therefore we must search and find it within us. The sooner it is learnt and practised the better it is. If we are not at peace with our own self we are sure to be at war with the outer world. The question is how to silence our mind. Here are some small tips for great peace :

* Make the mind focus on some noble object/goal such as Divine Name, chanting it constantly, with every breath.
* Perceive everything with a sense of detached attachment.
* Realize that life is a flux-joy, sorrow, success, failure pleasure, pain, union, separation, light, darkness are all indispensable in life, they keep on entering man's life by turns.
* Practise to live and enjoy the present moment as God's gift.
* Say ASAP (always say a prayer) and help others, squandering your love around.

* Spend some time of the day in the company of birds, animals, children, watering the plants etc.

* Learn and practise at all times the technique of quick reconciliation, acceptance and let go attitude.

Let's all learn ever to be happy by engaging our minds in the Divine Name. Let's befriend our mind.

Dear readers, the proof of the pudding is in eating it not describing, just try it!

May the articles in this issue enlighten you on the Godward march.

Prof. Dr. Madhumati M. Kulkarni
Editor-in-Chief.

❑

Thus Spake Gurudev...

Culled from his lectures and conversations
-Ref.: Prof. D. R. Ranade- Charitra aani Tatwadjyan-
by : Shri. S. G. Tulpule (Marathi).

1. We must take God's Name; He does our work.
2. Chanting the dinive Name is real Dharma; other tasks of Dharma are of no use.
3. Name is the rider, sound is the horse.
4. Chanting the Divine Name is important, not the experience.
5. Cure your disease by the Divine Name, take medicines for people's sake.
6. There is only one real road to happiness: chanting the Divine Name!
7. God's Name is better than His Form, Feeling it is the best.
8. Destiny means God's Grace.
9. Devotion is a lense through which God's Form is clearly seen.
10. Being cosmopolitan is not enough: you must become theo-politan.
11. To Ganges of self-knowledge is visible sometimes, invisible at other times.
12. Real saint is one by looking at whom you feel as though you had looked at God.
13. Excellence is the mark of spiritualism .
14. In God's university, one has to be a life-long student.
15. There is no god, but- God.
16. Mysticism is a process and not an event.
17. Spiritual seed sprouts in infinite ways.
18. Philosophy is the grammar.of Mysticism.
19. To realise God for oneself as well as for others is and should be the end of human life.
20. I prefer to speak through others.
21. I am brief because I want to be read.
22. I love nobody; I love God's men.
23. I believe nothing; I perceive.
24. I am a citizen of the Spiritual World.

Readers' Column

I have been a regular reader of *Pathway to God* since last twelve years. The Journal is very helpful in implanting the Divine Name in every aspiring soul. My humble request is please include articles related to spiritual teachers, the Divine Name and spiritual experiences of different saints of the bygone days.

- Mallikarjun M.Uppar,

Balaganur, Bijapur. Cell: 9980256813.

***

Dear Editor,

The *Pathway to God* with its new editor has assumed a new shape having a variety of features. The articles are easy to be digested by a layman and the learned alike. I very much wish this style is sustained so that maximum number of readers will be the beneficieries of the great Indian and Western thoughts in philosophy and religions. Kudos to the new Editorial Board!

- Prof. M. V. Bagi,

Head, Dept.of English, K.L.E.'s Lingaraj College, Belgaum. Cell: 9980125689

***

Dear Editor,

The current issue of *Pathway to God* provides a pool of philosophies that enable its readers to compare, affirm and reaffirm their own values and thoughts leading to highest goals of life. The key point that emerges is that the pathway to the higher goals is inclusive and not mutually exclusive. The articles help the readers to comprehend that the current interpretations tend to be governed by the milieu in which they are interpreted. Therefore one should seek to understand the Original.

- Dr. Raghu M. Kulkarni, M.Tech., Ph. D., *London.*
Raghvendra.Kulkarni@hochtief.de

Dear Editor,

The Jan.-March 2010 issue sprang many surprises, right from the portrait of Saint Shivalingavva on the cover page to the portrayal of a host of other spiritual masters inside, justifying thereby Gurudev's comparative interests. The new features were much awaited.

- Dr. S.L.M. Patil, *Jyoti College, Belgaum.* M. : 919481557222

***

There is a sea change in the appearance of the Journal. The contents have improved and hope to see many more innovative articles.

- M. V. Kulkarni, *Chartered Engineer, Belgaum.* M.: 9845184469.

***

The efforts of the Chief Editor of *Pathway to God* are worth appreciating. The blend of articles in different spheres of religion and philosophy is a novel and welcome change keeping in tune with Gurudev's vision. The last paragraph in Musings of the Editor : 'Let mankind have such pristine purity of mind and thought. Let its love pervade the whole universe. And the day when everyone begins to vibrate with birds, beasts, trees and creepers, water and sunshine, mountains and deserts, in fact with the whole nature we can say that he has developed and extended his love for everyone and every object around him. He will begin to identify a spark of divinity in every fellow being...then the world of ours can be a veritable heaven on earth. Let's all resolve to rise up and reach out to such a vibrant and exuberant world' speaks about the holistic perciption the world is aspiring for.

- Prof. Dr. Shailaja Aralelimath, *Gogte College of Commerce, Belgaum.*
Ph.: 0831-2481712.

❑

In response to our request for readers' views for our Readers' column we have been receiving words of appreciation/criticism/suggestions through e-mails/S.M.S s and calls. We are grateful to all of them for they help us to improve the quality of our Journal. We thank them all heartily and ask them to continue their contribution to our Readers' column.

-Editorial Board.

Sri NIMBARGI MAHARAJ

(Circa 1789-1885)

A Brief Life-Sketch

M. S. Deshpande

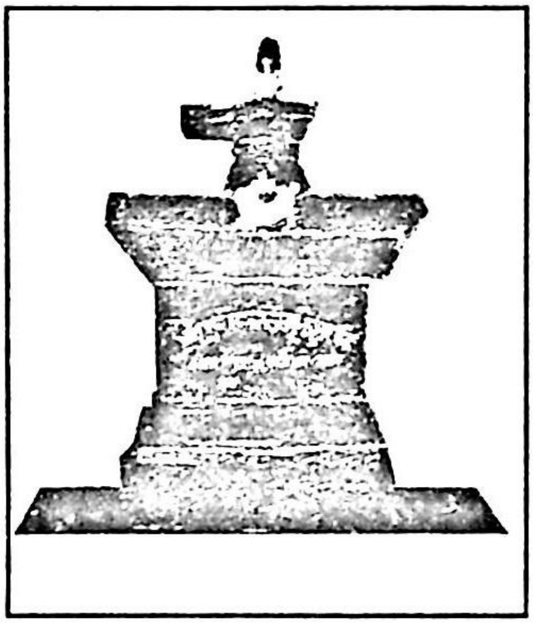
Sri Narayanrao Bhausaheb - popularly known as Sri Nimbargi Maharaj, can very well be regarded as spiritual Bhagirath. Just as King Bhagirath had, by his intense penance brought down the heavenly Ganga, to the parched earth and enabled it to bloom with fresh verdure, our spiritual Bhagirath also had, by his intense meditation, brought up the Spiritual Ganga, that had gone underground for centuries in this part and enabled the pining hearts to enjoy her blissful ambrosia. This holy Divine Stream, originated and issued from his heart, gradually gained momentum and expanse from his great disciples and aspired to reach the ocean of humanity through Sri Gurudev. Hence Sri Nimbargi Maharaj has been regarded as the originator of this *Sampradaya.*

Sri Narayanrao belonged to a *Veerasaiva* family of Nimbargi, a village in the Indi Taluka of Karnataka. When he was a youth of 25, once he was severely scolded by his father, for taking active part in the *Holi* revelry. In a fit of burning remorse and shame, he repaired to Pandharpur and ardently prayed the Lord for three days, to pardon him for his folly and guide him by the right path. On the third day, the Lord Vithal appeared in his dream and assured him : ''Child, don't worry! Go to Siddhagiri. You will find your Master to guide you''. This assurance restored his balance and he returned home in a normal mood. A few days afterwards, he went to Siddhagiri, near Kolhapur, on a pilgrimage. It was the place of his family God - Sri Kadasiddheshvara. After finishing the worship of Siddheshvara, he began to search his *Guru.* He had just come out of the temple, when he saw a *Yogi,*[1] emerging out of a cave nearby and beckoning Narayan to approach him. Greatly attracted by the lustrous figure, Narayan literally rushed towards the *Yogi* and fell at his feet. The *Yogi* gently raised him and took him inside his cave. There he blessed him with the Divine *Nama*, and advised him to meditate on it regularly. '' If you do this sincerely,'' he said, ''your fame would spread in all quarters.'' Fully satisfied with this blessing of the *Yogi*, Narayan returned home. But soon he was absorbed in his family life and did not attend to meditation properly for about six years. Realising this negligence on the part of his chosen disciple, the *Yogi* one day came to the house of Narayan. Greatly surprised by the sudden arrival of his *guru*, Narayan respectfully welcomed him and worshipped him. He paid Rs. 2/- as *Gurudakshana* to the *Guru*, who graciously returned them and advised him to use one for the *Prapancha* and the second one for the *Paramartha.* He solemnly promised his *Guru* that he would attend to meditation without fail in future. Overwhelmed with emotion he lay prostrate at the feet of his Master. And before he could rise and express his humble gratitude to him, the *Yogi* suddenly left him.

This incident brought about a revolutionary change in the outlook of Narayan. He made a firm resolve to mediregularly with one-pointed devotion. He gave up his profession of dyeing and adopted the occupation of a shepherd as that was very helpful for his meditation. He daily used to take his flock along with the flocks of other boys, request them to look after his flock and spend the whole day in soulful meditation under the shade of a tree nearby. Thus did proceed his continuous Sadhana, day after day, month after month and year after year, without the help and guidance of anybody. He received guidance and inspiration from the *Atman* residing in his heart, for his spiritual progress. He thus went on progressing from stage to stage for well-nigh 36 years. He visualised the *Atman,* conversed with the *Atman,* played with the *Atman* and ultimately merged in the infinity of the *Atman,* and enjoyed the ecstatic Bliss. He thus reached the pinnacle of spiritual elevation.

The external life of Sri Narayanrao Maharaj was quite uneventful. But his inner spiritual life must have been replete with thrilling incidents. But as it was a sealed book, none could know its grandeur. Sri Maharaj never revealed it to anybody. A few experiences that casually slipped from his reluctant lips and picked up by his most beloved disciple Sri Bhausaheb Maharaj, have become known to us. We are told that Sri Maharaj visualised the full form of the *Atman* from tip to toe, he had the vision of *Pancavadana* - the Lord with five faces, as well as of *Brahma, Visnu* and *Siva,* one above the other. He had also experienced the vision of the Infinite - of *Nirbayalu.* He had heard and visualised supersensuous Divine *Namas* and hence he was supposed to have brought the *Nama* from Heaven.

After attaining the highest spiritual goal, he lead the blessed life of a *Jivanmukta* - a Liberated Saint. He entrusted the management of the household affairs to his son and devoted his entire life exclusively to *Paramartha.* He carried on his *Sadhana,* blessed the deserving aspirants and gave discourses on *Dasabodha.* This went on for 28 years. After leading of such a perfectly fruitful, blissful life. Sri Maharaj attained *Samadhi* at the ripe age of 95, in 1885, leaving behind him a few valuable songs and Vacanas for the benefit of the aspirants, as well as a great Sampradaya of Rational Mystics for spiritual welfare of humanity.


Samadhi of
Sri Nimbargi Maharaj

Sri Maharaj thus belonged to the galaxy of the greatest of men, who lived and passed away unknown and whose thoughts later on, found expression in the second rate heroes who became known to the world. "He was," in the words of Sri Gurudev, "like a *Bakula* tree, whose flowers, though in a corner, would send their fragrance, throught the length and breadth of Karnataka."

Note : 1. Muniappa Muni was the name of his Yogi Guru and Gurulinga jangama was the appelation which Sri Maharaj used as his seal in his songs.

Source : 'Sri Nimbargi Maharaj (His Life and Teaching)' *-by his Disciples.*

MODIFICATIONS OF **MIND**

……………… Sri Siddheshwar Swamiji

The material objects exist in time and space.We cannot think of the existence of the table without time and space. Albert Einstein concurring with this, said: 'time and space are the two dimensions of matter, what is true of the table is equally true of the entire universe.' Universe, no doubt is very vast, it is boundless, nevertheless it is bound by time and space. Whatever is in time and in space has to come into existence and has to go out of existence. So is the universe. This can't be said of the soul since it has neither the temporal entity nor the spatial entity. It is a non-magnitudinal entity, because neither can it be weighed nor can it be measured. This is how matter and soul are entirely different from each other. Patanjali does not make any differnce between body and mind, while the former is a gross mind, the latter is a subtle matter. Though the states of the two differ they are essentially matter. Body and mind keep ever changing.Even for two moments they are not the same. They are transitory.Ralph Waldo Emerson a thinker, a saint, and a philosopher of America said that,life is transitory, but it can be a great source of blissful experience. Life is momentary, so also all our experiences. They are not permanent. These experiences, feelings and thoughts are called the modifications of the mind, that means mind takes the form of pleasure and pain. While the mind keeps itself modifying, the soul remains unchanged. It stands as a witness shining upon the mind and all its modifications. The body, and the universe are divisible as they are made up of atoms and particles, But not my soul. "I" is not an aggregation of particles, it has no magnitude, it does not extend in time and space. Patanjali says if at all there is anything indivisible, it is the soul or the self. Patanjali thus speaks of two entities: the material and the immaterial. As one is opposite to the other, one cannot be the product of the other. That means self is not the brain, nor the nervous system, nor any of them. It cannot be equated with whatever that is happening within me. It is different from all these material happenings. It is simply consciousness in existence. In contrast to this, the table is neither conscious of itself nor is it conscious of me. I know that there is a table but the table does not know me. In the same way the body does not know that I am there, whereas I am conscious of the body, and of eveything. Whatever may be the object of my knowledge, that is the matter. To make it simpler, table is the object of my knowledge; it is outside, 'I' is the subject of my knowledge it is within. The act of cognition joins them together. The subject of knowledge remains subject, never does it become an object of knowledge and vice versa., i.e as I see the table (object) I cannot see myself (subject). I cannot make myself an object of my knowledge. Logically it is not possible. Object is always an object and subject is always a subject. To be conscious of this entity is the purpose and the goal of yoga, because, man identifies himself with the body; with the mind; with the feelings. They are not the ingredients of self. When I see a table there arises in my mind a feeling, either of pleasure or of pain. This is in the mind. The self or the consciousnes is shining on the feeling. But I take this feeling for the real, overlooking the self. I identify myself with these feelings. This is the bondage, when one comes to know that the self is different from the matter, from the mind and from the feelings, that is realisation. The realisation of the Self. With this, man is freed from all bondages.

Things of the world do not bind. I see the object, enjoy it and yet never get attached to that. It is love for the entire universe, and not infatuation. There is pleasure but not transitory one. This is the special state one can achieve with the practice of yoga, according to Patanjali. If matter and soul are properly discriminated, freedom from bondage is sure to follow. Unfortunate thing about us is, we are too much with the mind and its modifications. Unless these modifications are set to rest, the experience of soul remains only in the book. Before they are set right,a clear understanding of mind and its modification is essential.

Yoga is defined as *"Chitta Vritti Nirodha"* in other words, the removal of the modifications of mind. Two things are to be understood: One, what are the modifications? Second, how to remove them?

Modifications of the Mind :

The mind has five modifications. The first modification is the right cognition, for e.g.. mind takes the form of the table as it is. With this, the valid knowledge of the table is gained.

The Second modification is 'false cognition' that is, if I see the table I take it for a chair. If there is "x" I take it for "y" mistake one for the other. Suppose Mr. "x" is friendly, but sometimes I mistake him for an enemy. In one's lifetime one experiences many such moments.

Once there was a barber. He was poor and he served the king. It was not possible for him to make both ends meet. He could not provide all kinds of facilities to his wife and children. Nevertheless he led a contented life with his meagre income. One day while passing through a forest,to his surprise he came across seven jars of gold and nobody to claim them! He thought, he rightly owned them and brought them home. He opened the jars one by one. He went on feeling that he was a millionaire. When he opened the seventh jar, to his utter disappointment it was only half filled. He felt himself to be poor the very moment. All the six jars together could not make him rich. Now his richness depended on the seventh jar. He hit upon an idea that, the seventh jar also must be filled, and he would be the richest person! He started working day and night with a singular purpose of becoming the richest man. So singular was he in his struggle to fill the jar that he could not attend to his daily needs, like food and rest, for a long stretch of thirty years. Now old and body emaciated, yet his mind harped only on the seventh jar. How to fill it! Now the barber was on his death-bed, by his side seven jars of gold.The seventh jar was laughing at the foolishness of the barber. It was mocking at him, "oh barber, 'I have killed so many people like you . I am of no use to anybody in the world. Many have tried to fill me. None has succeeded, because my nature is to be empty. What is true of me is true of your mind too! Your mind is like the seventh jar of gold. It is half happy and half unhappy. Half contented and half pining and craving for what is not. Where it ought to find pleasure it finds pain; only pain, what a pity! It never finds pleasure. Seventh jar is the source of pain, and agony, still we are trying to find pleasure in it.'' This is the example of wrong cognition or false cognition, and this is the source of all human suffering, and for making life all ugly. Unless this mind is purified, there would be no trace of contentment. Life can never be beautiful. When this is set right, mind would be purified, and life would be beautiful.

The third modification is the 'Verbal cogniton' i.e. first of all, mind creates something imaginary and then makes vain attempt to achieve it. For example heaven. It is purely the creation of mind. It conveniently forgets that it is its own creation and then sets on searching such a heaven. Thus in smoking it finds heaven and heavenly pleasure. Similarly it creates hell and then tries to avoid the hell. This is indeed a peculiar nature of mind. This is called the 'verbal cognition.' The mind says if there are rings on my fingers then I shall be happy. This is purely the mind's creation. Nature has not designed and created any ring for the fingers, for it knows what is good for the fingers. But mind finds something lacking in the grand design of nature and it starts making up for this shortfall. This is how the mind creates the world and the worldly life which is called "Sansaar" in Sanskrit. Sansaar means material entanglement. To give yet one more example of this verbal cognition, somebody tells me that I am great. Mind is very quick to grab this word and starts thinking that I am really very great. It becomes an obsession. Sitting or standing, sleeping or wakeful, there is only one obsession and that is "I am great". When this imaginary greatness is not acknowledged by others it begins to suffer, it feels being let down; it feels a shameful humiliation. It feels deeply hurt. How true! How wonderful is the analysis of mind and its unknown contours by Patanjali!

The fourth modification is that mind does not live in the present moment. It oscillates between the past and the future. Even as we are sitting here-your mind has gone either to the world of dead past or to the not-yet-born future. Never does the mind taste the present moment. For instance, I hold a flower now. It has an attractive colour, bewitching fragrance, a delicate touch and a slender form, but what does the mind do? Does it enjoy this flower that is very much here and at this moment? No, it has gone into the past and is thinking of a flower that does not exist now and here! It wants that which is not there. This is how it never stands still even for a moment to experience the present. It is always in movement. Psychologists rightly say that all young people live in the future; all old people live in the past; and sadly nobody lives in the present. But life does not come as past or as future. It comes every moment. It comes bit by bit as present moment.

The fifth modification of mind is, it takes rest when it should not; it does not take rest when it should. Now we are discussing a serious topic - where mind is expected to be quite wakeful, it falls into sleep. When the whole world is awake; the bright sun is in the sky; I close my eyes. I enter into slumber. When the sky is grey and cloudy, no sun and no stars, severe winter and I open my eyes. When we have to enjoy life, we sleep; when there is nothing left to enjoy, we are awake. This is the fiffh modification of mind.

As long as these modifications are present in the mind, meditation is not possible. To reach the goal of yoga meditation is indispensable. So, yoga philosophy has a device that would help in removing these modifications of mind.

- Sri Siddheshwar Swamiji
in discourses on Yoga Philosophy
Compiled and edited by Prof. M.V. Bagi,
Head Dept. of English, Lingaraj College, Belgaum.

❑

'The mind, in brief, is not a material but a spiritual instrument. It is not a recorder but a prompter of our ideas. It is our teacher and guide toward a freer, juster and better world''

- William James

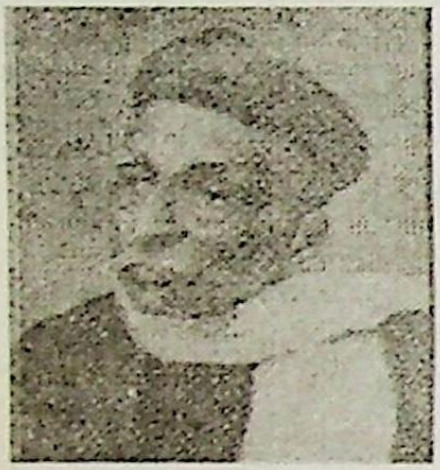
* * *

Mind maketh the heaven of hell
And hell of Heaven

-John Milton
in Paradise Lost.

GURUDEV AND **MYSTICISM**

S. G. Tulpule



Gurudev used to describe philosophy by the term 'mysticism.'. In his views mysticism is nothing but philosophy. During 1913 he came across Underhill's book *Mysticism*. Ever since Gurudev gripped and imbibed the term. In fact all his works are interpretations of mysticism. Many people associate Dr. Ranade with mysticism. There is a grain of truth in this equation. Gurudev amassed the complete import of mysticism in the form of his own spiritual experiences. In his own words, 'it is said revelation is an occult knowledge. But it is not so; it is a manifested knowledge. But it is manifest only in him who has spiritual experiences. In a study of science something is accepted / taken for granted as hypothesis and then the experiments follow. Based on this it is proved by the test, then it takes the form of a philosophy (*Siddhanta*). In the same manner, in this revelatory knowledge the path of *sadhana* as shown by the saints is to be taken as hypothesis. When it is proved by our own experiences only then it is taken as *Siddhanta* or *Shastra*, philosophy or Science.'

Mysticism comes from the Greek word *Mystein*, means 'closing the lips.' Thus mysticism means silence मुनेर्भाव: मौनम् Our scriptures define a saint's state as being silent. Mysticism in Greek language means *epoche*-silence. Gurudev elaborates his idea of mysticism in his foreword to *Mysticism in Maharashtra*. He says, 'Mysticism denotes that attitude of mind which involves a direct, immediate, first- hand, intuitive apprehension of God...Mysticism implies a silent enjoyment of God. It is the combined character of mystical experience namely , its ineffable and intuitive character which has served to make all God-aspiring humanity a common and hidden society, the laws of which are known to themselves, if at all. We may even say, that they are known only to God, and not even to them! (p. 1-2).

It was his firm faith that the revelation of God is possible in this birth itself with the help of viable Gurumantra (*sabija*) received from an authorised Guru and his grace. This was not a superstition but it was validated by his intelligence and experience. Gurudev followed and realized the path of self-realization only after contemplating on thoughts and philosophy of great men of the East and the West, he evaluated them scientifically, assessed them by self-experience and investigated by his analytical mind. Prof. Ranade does not accept a single thought related to spiritualism and sainthood the way it is prevailing in the present society. His philosophy is based on experience and spiritual realization.

He says 'प्रत्ययावाचुनि जें ज्ञान । ते अवघे अनुमान '- knowledge without experience is only a doubtful knowledge and it is not possible to gain happiness from such knowledge.

To see and experience the God within is the very essence of Gurudev's teachings. In that sense dot, sound, flame, nothingness all these become complementary terms. Self-knowledge, self-realization, self-revelation these terms get their true meanings from the experiences Gurudev had which were confirmed by saints like Dnyaneshwara. In Gurudev's views जितुके गांव तितुके देव as many places, so many Gods. God is self-realization. आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः is his faith. Such an experience is beyond words. Although revelatory experience encompasses feelings, aspiration and delight these alone are not sufficient for revelatory experiences- आत्मसाक्षात्कार. This is because the revelatory experience is independent and intuitve-*sui generis.* It is a spontaneity from within. Since the spontaneous form and spiritual experiences are so indescribable and closely connected that the revelatory cult is almost the same everywhere and is occult to some extent.

That does not mean that mysticism is a secret knowledge since self-experience is the greatest test of experience in spiritualism. Hence mysticism is not a mere devotion - *Bhakti* - nor the path of devotion - *bhakti marga*, it is the very boundary of devotion. That is why Mysticism is not translated as occultism (गूढविद्या) but it is called revelation साक्षात्कार.

- *Based on प्रा. रा. द. रानडे - चरित्र आणि साक्षात्कार by Shri. S. G. Tulpule.*

-Editor.

❑

BARDOL's SACRED **DHARMASHALA**

Prof. Dr. K. B. Dabade

One seldom comes across a devotee who is blessed with spiritual experiences of different faiths. Such a one was Sri Gurudev R. D. Ranade, one of the rare mystics who had the mystical experiences of Islam, Zorastrianism and Christianity, apart from those of various *upasanas* of Hinduism in 1920's and onwards on the strength and power of meditation on *Sabija Nama* (Seed viable name) imparted to him by the saint of Umadi in 1901. Gurudev Ranade had disciples from all the aforesaid faiths with the exception of Zorastrianism and great mystics like him have already laid the solid spiritual foundation for the unity of mankind as a whole and it is left to the true lovers of mankind to recognize and propagate such mystical experiences with great zeal and devotion. My endeavour however in this article is to bring to the notice of all persons and institutes interested in promoting peace and harmony in the world, a brief narration of Islamic experiences of Gurudeo Ranade at Dharmashala[1] in Bardol (Indi Taluka, Bijapur District, Karnataka State) in early 1920's and the Dharmashala's present condition and its surroundings based mainly on the secondary and primary sources of data respectively.

An essence of the extract from the writing of Padmashri

Kakasaheb Karkhanis regarding the incident at Bardol Dharmashala is as under:

Once Gurudeo Ranade, along with Kakasaheb Karkhanis, Jagannath Lele and one or two other persons had camped at Bardol's Dharmashala on his way to Devara Nimbargi, to attend the celebration of the erection of the *Samadhi* of Sri Nimbargi Maharaj. The next day morning Gurudeo instructed all those who started their journey by walk to Devara Nimbargi to perform *Bhajan* and he started his journey in bullock cart. After sometime Gurudeo called Kakasaheb alone and told him "Ganapat Rao (Kakasaheb), how sacred is Bardol's Dharmashala !" Kakasaheb asked, "Oh! What miracle happened there?" Gurudeo said, "During meditation at night I heard the names of Musalmani faith." On hearing this Kakasaheb observed, "If Sri Maharaj (The Saint of Umadi) grants me strength I will construct a mosque in that place."On hearing Kakasaheb's words, Gurudeo lapsed into silent watching the sky. Kakasaheb writes: "Gurudeo alone knows what he 'saw' there" (*vide* Kakasaheb 1977: 52-54).

Later, Gurudeo was blessed with the experiences of divine names of Zorastrianism and Christianity. It is the firm conviction of Gurudeo Ranade that there is no need to perform different *Sadhanas* to have the mystical experiences of different faiths and it is possible to have the same experiences by the practice of meditation on Seed name imparted by the spiritual teacher (vide Sangoram 1964: 172).

I came to know the above incident not only through the works of Sri Kakasaheb Karkhanis and Sri K.D. Sangoram but also through the *pravachanas* of the former held at Nimbal and Bijapur in late 1960's. With the passage of time the curiosity in me to visit Bardol's Dharmashala did not subside on the contrary it grew irresistible and I visited the place along with the research team[2] on 3rd August 2009. I share some of the thrilling experiences with the readers :

When we entered the premises of Bardol we asked the inmates of the village who gathered around us to show Dharmashala. They immediately pointed their fingers at it from a little distance and took us to the spot. The Dharmashala was in a dilapidated condition but for the single window and a small portion of stone wall mixed with mud in different proportions in almost all the directions. The area was covered with irregularly grown bush. According to the villagers the area of the Dharmashala was large enough. They showed us an already constructed new building-Grama Lekkigara Vasati Griha within its vicinity.

The villagers however had not known anything about Gurudeo Ranade's spiritual experiences at Dharmashala until we informed them. Then the villagers did not fail to draw our attention to Maruti Temple and an interesting monument, popularly known as Muskavvana Gudi[3] or *Grama Devathe* just in front of the Dharmashala. The Muskavvana Gudi (Temple) looks like a Mosque or Darga from a distance. Its entrance and *sanctum sanctorum* with the *padukas* bear the features of the Hindu temple. Behind the *sanctum sanctorum,* there is a tomb too. We were told by the villagers that this Muskavvana Gudi had some link with the mosque of Bardol because certain important religious ceremonies of the two were interrelated and interdependent. Further, the villagers expressed that the Muskavvana Gudi stands for the Hindu-Muslim unity and that the Dharmashala's past glory must be revived and therefore it must be renovated and protected by the concerned authorities.

We bade goodbye to the Bardol's sacred Dharmashala with heavy heart. It was painful to see its condition and its surrounding monuments which stand testimony to the unity of the two different faiths and the villagers who cooperated and guided us throughout in gathering the useful and necessary information on the subject.

Notes:

1. Dharmashala/e: A building for travellers; asylum; a school at which the children are taught gratis (Bucher's Kannada-English Dictionary 1989: 272).

2. The research team comprised of Sri B. V. Joshi-Solapur, M. Uppar-Balaganur, Niraj. S. Kulkarni-Belgaum and the author.

3. Once during the regime of the Adil Shah, the villagers (10-15) of Bardol told that the invaders approached the interesting monument and asked whether there was any Linga (phallic) inside it. The two sisters wearing the veil (Musuka in Kannada) told them that there was no Linga inside it. This is the reason why it is called Muskavvana Gudi. Historical research in this respect can throw further light on this.

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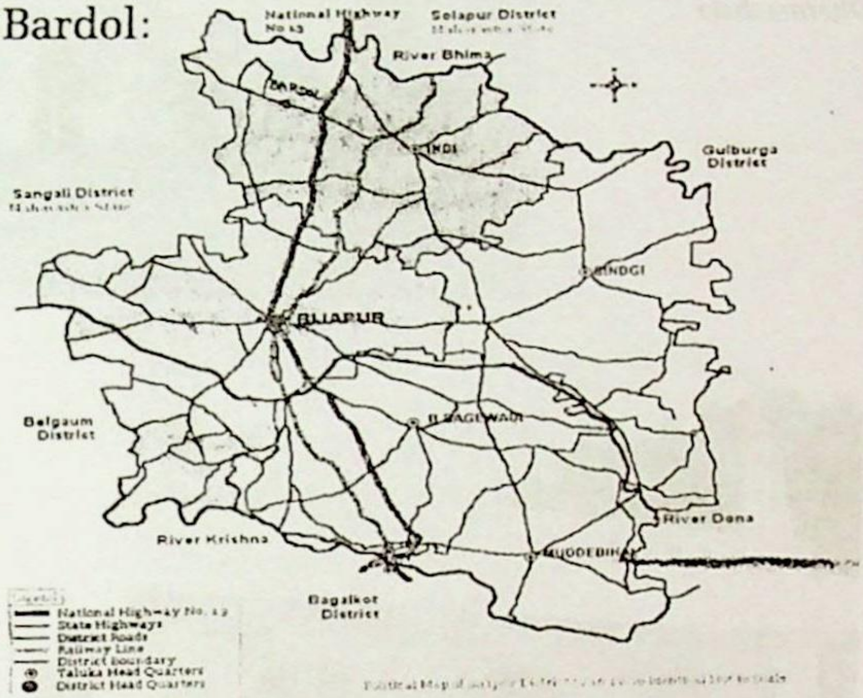
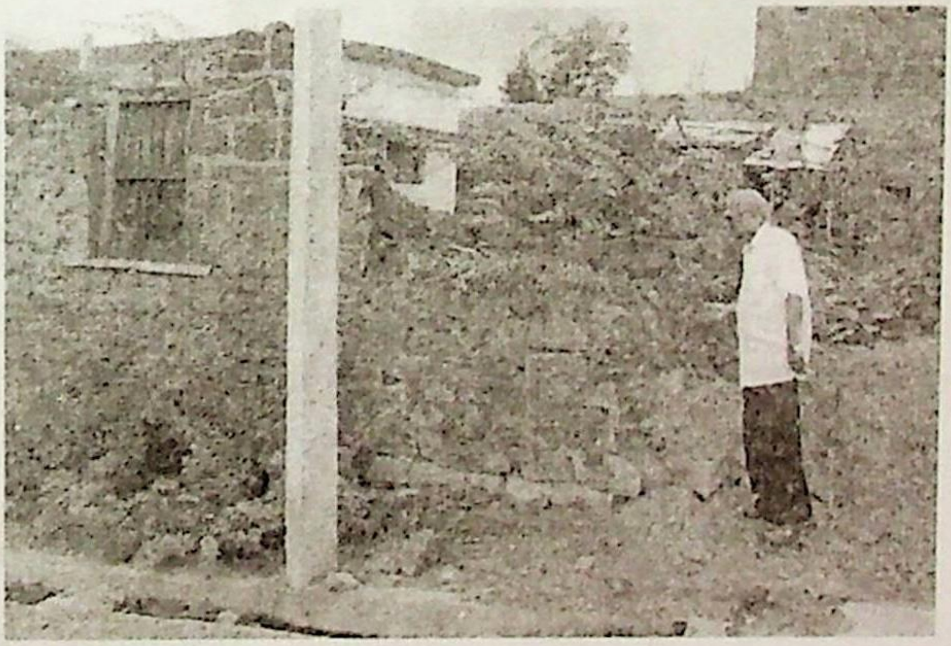
Jamakhandi
- *Sangoram K.D. (1964, First Edition), Gurudeo Ranade yanchya Punya smru□iti (Marathi), Gurudeo Ranade Ashram, Nimbal.*

MAP

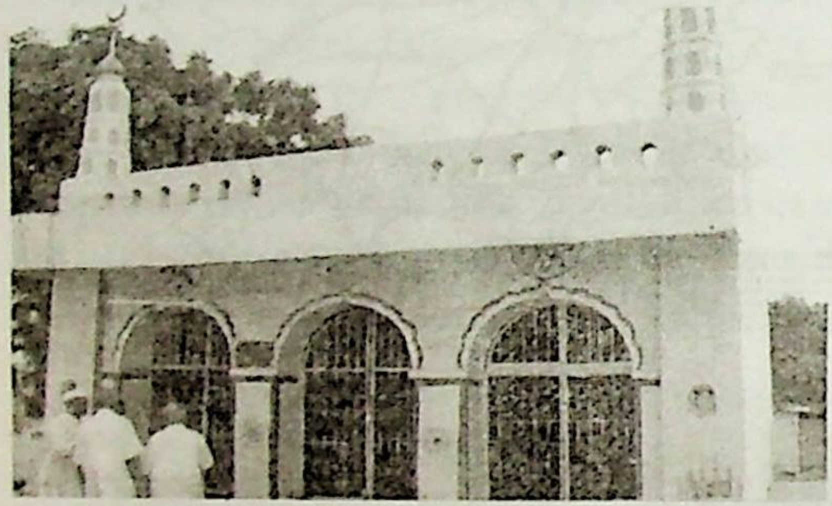
Map leading to Bardol:


National Highway No 13
Solapur District
Maharashtra State
River Bhima
BARDOL
INDI
Gulburga District
Sangali District
Maharashtra State
SINDGI
BIJAPUR
Belgaum District
B.BAGEWADI
River Dona
River Krishna
MUDDEBIHAL
Bagalkot District
National Highway No. 13
State Highways
District Roads
Railway Line
District boundary
Taluka Head Quarters
District Head Quarters



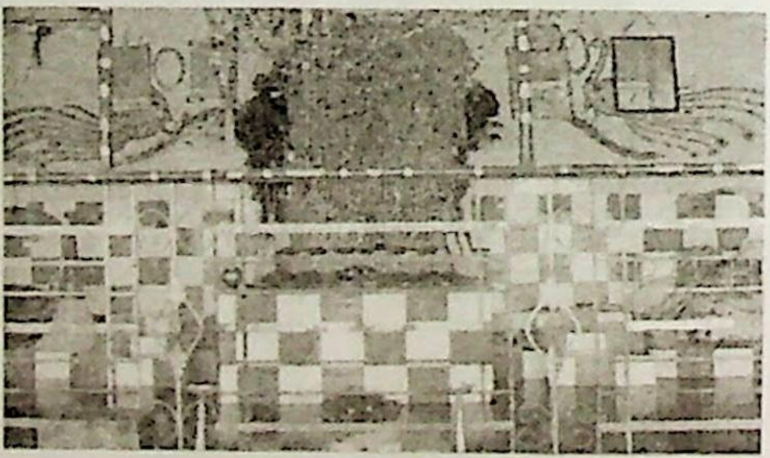
1. The author inspecting The Dharmashala.

2. *The villagers and the research team in front of The Dharmashala*



3. *Musakkavana Gudi*

4. *The Padukas in Musakkavana Gudi.*



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THE REALM OF **SAINTS**

Prof. Dr. Madhumati M. Kulkarni

We are starting a new feature *The Realm of saints* to cover dispassionately in each issue the life and achievements of a known or unknown saint born in this world to enlighten and transform the lives of common people. India being a veritable land of saints and sages; besides covering them, we shall also focus on saints of the world. Readers can contribute to this feature.- *Editor.*

India is undoubtedly considered as a land of saints since ages. We find their traces through the length and breadth of the Indian soil. Though each saintly soul reached its own destined heights in the realization of the Cosmic Consciousness only very few are known to the world while others lay buried in the Time's embryo. Here's is an honest attempt made to unearth those glorious souls whose lives will show light to the future generations.

Several faiths, cults, and religions have flourished in India and people following them have lived happily unless they are raked up by some forces beyond their control. Nonetheless Adi Shankara's Monism, Ramanuja's Vishisthadwaita, Madhwa's Dwaita, Jainism, Shaivism etc., hold good even today and the followers of their respective faiths have reached great spiritual heights.

What follows is a dispassionate presentation of a galaxy of Dasas of Karnataka State who inculcated the path of devotion in the simple minds.

It is hard to trace when the Bhagavat faith came into vogue and who its founder was. It can only be stated that since the day people started singing the glory of the Lord Supreme, believing in His powers and getting convinced that only He can emancipate them from the clutches of the terrestrial life they might have clung to this faith. The Dwaita, Adwaita, Vishishtadwaita faiths might have risen only thereafter. (Vide : Belur Keshavadas's Karnataka Bhakta Vijaya, foreword). But prior to these triple faiths, Bhagavat faith had been growing independently, unobjected by any of the faiths.

Several faiths in the annals of history have risen and disappeared and lost their traces in the course of time. Without deliberate attempt the Bhagvat faith went on growing naturally. That is the reason why it is still existing. It is seen in the form of Bhajans and Keertanas. But it was not just confined to imparting education to the society, ref. *Padmapurana, Gita.* During Lord Krishna's time the glory of God in hymns must have reached its peak.

This religious preaching through Keertana started flourishing as an institution under the patronage of the kings. Kings in their turn expanded their frontiers with their help. Chanakya had with him a support of a large group of these bards in order to help King Chandragupta extend the boundaries of his kingdom. Gradually the Bhagavat faith lost its true worth when the bards sang in praise of their kings forgetting the King of kings.

Thus the Bhagvat faith underwent several changes when was caught under the current of time and powerful rulers used it for their convenience. It was almost on the brink of annihilation when it was revived by a staunch Vaishnava saint Achalananda of Karnataka during 9th century.

In Tamil Nadu the Bhagavat faith got ramified as Shaiva and Vaishnava branches. Both flourished under ancient 'Shivasharanas' and 'Alwars' respectively.

In the Northern India owing to the atrocities of the Muslim rulers kingdoms and educational institutions perished. Treasures of the liabraries were reduced to ashes. Countless lives were lost. It was impossible to have historical records of the northern Indians about the Bhagavat faith. However the Hinduism survived due to their strong-headedness. Krishna Chaitanya of Bengal and Tulasidas of U.P. revived the faith. The traces of this faith can be seen in Maharashtra during 13th century. Till this day, the faith flourished and grew under the patronage of its rulers.

Sri Achalananda -

Sri Achalananda was by birth a follower of Bhagwat faith. He lived in Haiganpura in Bangalore. His successors still live in Turuvekere, Tumkur District. Achalananda's father's name was Nrusimhadas and he was a devotee of Lord Nrusimha. It is believed that his ancestors were bards singing in praise of the God.

From the available records it appears that despite being residents of Haiganpura he never stayed for long at one place. He used to travel long followed by a host of disciples. He travelled on foot through the width and breadth of India preaching Bhagavat Dharma.

Installing his favorite deity Shree Nrusimha in a palanquin adorned by Garuda and Anjaneya he used to walk with a tambourine in his hand and devotional songs on his lips. The invisible 'Rudraganas' used to bear the palanquin.

During his pilgrimage he came to Pandharpur in Maharashtra to serve the lotus feet of Lord Vithala. One afternoon, while offering the holy water-*arghya*- after his dip in the river Bheemarathi (also called Chandrabhaga) Lord Vithala appeared before him and asked him not to drop the *arghya*. From then on Achalananda was blessed and started composing hymns under the name Achalananda Vitthala. Then on he was recognized as Achalananda Das instead of Nrusimha Das.

From Northern India Achalananda proceeded to Nepal. The then Prince of Nepal was stung by a snake and died. The arrangements for the funeral rituals were on. Achalananda, as was his practice, came that way with the Lord Nrusimha Vitthala's idol in the palanquin, borne by the invisible Rudraganas. The King prostrating before the revered Dasa entreated to restore his son to life. The Dasa chanted Garuda Mantra and drew the poison that had spread out in his body. Overwhelmed with joy the King offered valuables to him. But the Dasa did not take anything but 12 areas of Shaligrama. He appointed his disciples for propogating Bhagavat Dharma in six of these areas.

As he wished, after his pilgrimage he returned to Karnataka. In those days Rashtrakutas were ruling Karnataka. They became his disciples. They donated twelve villages to his ninety-six disciples for their sustenance. Another twelve villages were donated to the Dasa for his expenses toward propogating the Dharma. Today it is known as Turuvekere, a part of Tumkur. Achalananda named it as Narasimhapura.

Mudduvithala, Gopinath, Haridasa, Timmannadasa, Pandurangdasa of Achalananda family became renowned Haridasas. Despite being Smartha Brahmins they follow the Vaishnava faith and put *namas* like Vaishnavas as followers of Achalanandadasa. These dasas do not perform separate poojas. Each member during his turn performs the pooja of Vithala Nrusimha of the Dasa's period. It is performed in all magnificance and dedicate it to Achalanandadasa.

After some time the rulers of Halgalwadi grew strong and became kings of Turuvekere. A ruler, Annayya Nayak by name got built Gangadhareshwara shrine where Pandurangdasa was staying. He also built a Vithala temple for the Dasa. Even today it is known as Dasa's Shrine.

Since the regime of the Rashtrakutas the successors of the Dasa family enjoyed the twelve villages gifted to them. Other land owners grew jealous of this. Added to it was

Annayya Naik's trust in Pandurangdasa. They started hatching a plot against him in order to enrage Annayya Nayak toward Pandurangdasa who never used to dine outside. Annayya Nayak organised a festival at Gangadhareshwara temple. Pandurangdasa's rivals induced their master to invite Pandurangdasa for dinner. When Annayya himself invited the Dasa, the latter politely hinted at his vow of not taking any food other than Lord's prasadam. The king got angry, his hatred towards the Dasa grew to such an extent that he cancelled the sanction of the twelve villages. The Dasa not wishing to live among enemies retreated to Vithaladevara halli, built a Nrusimha temple and started living there.

After some time the kings of Mysore defeated the Palyagara of Magalwadi, Pandurangdasa got back his villages. These were again snatched by Tipu Sultan and received during Krishnaraj Wodeyar's regime by the intervention of his minister, Poornayya.

Several palmyara writings are found as an evidence of Bhagvat faith prevailing during 9th century. Achalananda Dasa holds a memorable place in this realm of saints as the pioneer saint of Madhwa faith.

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Attention Contributors & Readers !

Readers' Column: *The Editorial Board of Pathway to God has successfully introduced this Readers' column to publish the views of the readers on various spiritual / philosophical / religious articles published therein. Their views/comments/ appreciation will help us improve the quality of the journal.*

The views should be in 3-4 sentences only.

Looking forward to your views.

***

It has been resolved to make the quarterly issue, Pathway to God more comprehensible and action-oriented as the changing times demand. Hence it is necessiated to modify the length of the articles. Kindly note the following points while sending your articles :

1. ***The articles should not exceed four pages of A4 size.***
2. ***Only one long article of approx. 10 pages of A4 size will be published in each issue.***
3. ***The article should not be carried forward to the next issue***

We thank all our contributors profusely and expect more and more insightful and erudite articles in future to make Gurudev's vision of one God, one religion and one humanity a reality.

***

Pathway To God is going to add a new feature
' My Spiritual experiences' from next issue onwards.
The desirous readers are requested to share with us their spiritual / mystical experiences or some dream/vision/clairvoyance etc., they had in their life.
Such writings should not exceed 500 words.
Looking forward to your spiritual experiences!

- Editorial Board

RELIGION AND **DEMOCRACY**

Nagshetty K. Shetkar

Religion in general is to give succour to every unhappy, sorrowful person and help him resolve the difficulties of life. Religion indeed incepted for welfare. Any particular religion is a specific way to resolve social problem in its unique way. Lack of democracy in religions led to modifications giving birth to sub-sects. Democracy is the process in which spontaneous changes can be planned to achieve some social and material developments. So welfare of every one is possible through democracy.

The definition of democracy 'for the people, of the people and by the people' is as well applicable to religions. Democracy is defined by every religion and it accepts all those welfare aspects from the religions. Summation of common good theme of religions and practising best of them is nothing but democracy. Indian democracy prescribes some fundamental duties to citizens. So the religions also prescribe some fundamental practices to their followers.

Democratical mindset of the religions

Proverbs like *Paropakarartham idam Shareeram* - the life is meant for rendering service to others, and *Sarve Janah Sukhino Bhavantu''* strengthen the democratic set-up.

I. Anubhava Mantapa[1]

The house of religious experiences was established in 1140 A.D. at the city of Kalyana. Anubhava Mantapa is a unique contribution of Basaveshwara. This institution attracted seekers of truth so rapidly that people from all castes, various occupations, and of different ranks gathered round nucleus. This rare, monumental institution contributed voluminously to mystic literature and a galaxy of seven hundred and seventy saints, together with thousands of followers within a short span of time. Among this constellation three hundred were writers, and sixty ladies were great saints, thirty of these produced a large volume of literature.

Many problems concerning the individuals and society were discussed in this assembly. When we go through the dialogues of Anubhava Mantapa we are surprised to see the first idea of a parliament generating in the history of mankind. Prabhudeva, a great Yogi of extraordinary achievement, was the president and Lord Basava acted as the prime minister. Chennabasava can be compared to the speaker, editor, and compiler of Vachana literature. The only difference between the present day parliament and Anubhava Mantapa is that the members were not elected by the people. They were picked up or nominated by the higher authorities of the Mantapa; the necessary qualification expected was spiritual attainment. The problems concerning social, religious, spiritual, yogic, psychological, economic and literary aspects were tackled.

The members of the Mantapa and followers had freedom of thought, speech and action. They were allowed to put any questions or doubts to get them cleared in front of the congregation and a systematic program was launched to record and preserve the dialogues taking place in the House. These discussions remind us of Dialogues of Plato, the great Greek philosoher. But they differ from the latter in being characterized by the highest mystical experiences. We can see even today the caves cut out of brittle stony hillocks, in and around the city of Kalyana. These mystics used to retire to the caves for intense meditation. The Mantapa can be called as Experimental Station where these mystic-scientists were engaged in finding out solutions for various problems of life,both spiritual and mundane.

The people of high caste, with their vested interests tried to impose on the ignorant masses the idea that the former were the issues of meritorious ancestry and that the latter were of sinful birth. Owing to their ignorance the low-castes and untouchables laboured under the delusion that they were born to be slaves because of the sins committed during and inherited from their past births. They believed that to strive to improve their plight was a heinous sin, and that to live where and as they lived was their life's purpose as its fulfillment. There was a dire need to lift the evil of such illusions of inferiority. In order to brainwash this assimilated belief, Basava preached; "You too are human beings harboring the divine spark within you. You have every right to live as men and women in all respects equal to any one else, and the right to achieve saintliness and redemption''. A crusade was launched to free both the high castes and the low castes from their respective superiority and inferiority complexes.

Unique preachings of equality charged with the acceptance of the parenthood of god and the fraternity of humanity fascinated the tortured minds and consoled the gasping hearts of the oppresed and distressed masses. The burning zeal of Basava to place religion on a democratic basis, his passionate love for God and his untiring energy in serving humanity added to the glory of Anubhava Mantapa.

The Lingayat religion, being reformative in its outlook was more progressive than aggressive. It lay more emphasis on evolution by tergiversation or change of mind rather than on sanguinary revolution. Thus Basaveshwara and his followers were imbued with an antagonistic spirit towards any other community. But as, Rev. N. C. Sargent aptly says, ''Basava's aim was not to oppose or propose any religious or philosophical system; but to show people the existing social and religious evils and, if possible, to remove these evils from society".

The fundamental principles accepted by Anubhava Mantapa may be summarized as follows:

All are equal; no man is high or low either by birth, sex or occupation. Woman has equal rights with man to follow the path of self-evolution. Each one should follow a profession of his own choice. All deeds (kayakas) are honorable professions. No deed is either low or high. Varnas (or castes) and Ashrams (or stages) are to be discarded. Renunciation and dwelling in forest are ruled out as cowardly tendencies to escape from life. Inter-group marriages and free dining should be encouraged. Untouchability has no place in the society. Every man is free to think on all spiritual and social subjects. Reason and experience are only guiding lights for free thinking and spiritual advancement. Language of the people should be the medium for imparting spiritual and secular education. All men have equal rights to participate in spiritual discussions, acquire spiritual Knowledge and follow the same path of self-evolution.

Basava was head of treasury of King Bijjala of Kalyanan Chalukyas. Once his relatives arrived to meet him. He was busy in settling the accounts of the King's treasure. After finishing his work he put off one lamp and lit up another. He was asked why he did so, he replied that the lamp that he used for settling Kingdom's work was lit up by the citizen's money, and second lamp out of his own expenditure. He argued even his King had no right to the Public money for the personal use. That must be spent for society only. This instance explains the ethics of democracy.

II. Zakat[2], or *alms-giving*. This is the practice of giving based on accumulated wealth and is obligatory for all Muslims who can afford it. A fixed portion is spent to help the poor or needy, and also to assist the spread of Islam. The zakat is considered a religious obligation (as opposed to voluntary charity)that the well-off owe to the needy bacause their wealth is seen as a " trust from God's bounty". The Qur'an and the hadith also suggest a Muslim ought to give even more as an act of voluntary alms-giving (*sadaqah*). Many Shi'ites are expected to pay an additional amount in the form of a *Khums* tax, which they consider to be a separate practice of ritual. Jakat of the Muslim for the upliftment of the poor is nothing but the practice of democracy.

III. Panchasheela of Buddhism

IV. Ahimsa: the Foremost Virtue[3]: Jainism assigns the greatest importance to the principle of ahimsa (non- violence) in life. It occupies the foremost place amongst all virtues so much so that it is regarded as ''the divine principle or supreme law of this world.'' Ahimsa, observes Albert Einstein, ''is essential if mankind is to survive and move toward higher levels'' A Jain text states: *dhammo mangalmukkithham, ahimsa sanjamo tavom* i. e., speaking of mangal, the supreme beneficial thing, ahimsa precedes self-control and austerities. Of the ten virtues (forgiveness, etc,) as well as five vows, *ahimsa* occupies the first place amongst moral laws. In no other religion is the doctrine of *ahimsa* explained as systematically and comprehensively as in Jainism.

V. Democracy accepts noble values from the religions and it drops out the non-implicable aspects. Such as: Ahimsa may not be practised as proposed in Jainsm. Islamic law of punishment (Shariyat) is not accepted as mentioned in Quran. Gender inequality of Hinduism is not at all possible to accept.

VI. Heterodox religions may deny the God, but they are also motiffs of welfare.

VII. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, one the advisors of Indian constitution committee and M. K. Gandhi, the father of the nation propose the Rama Rajya (welfare state). Bothemphasize Democratic system. Both knew that the over-all welfare of mankind can be achieved in the democratic system alone.

VIII. Indian democratic set-up intended to practise equality, fraternity, welfare, human rights and all-round growth of every citizen. Indeed all these values are adopted from various religions. But importing religion into politics for selfish motives yeilds no results on the contrary it proves detrimental to the society. Secularism - based philosophy of empowering the down-trodden, uplifting the suppressed and backward classes, human value and development-based political movement ruled most of terms. This proves that democracy elaborated values of every religion every faith and every human being.

IX. Conclusion : Without the base of religion; the moral conduct,cultural development , spiritual progress, eternal values can not be achieved.Without democracy welfare of every one and *Sahajivana* universal brotherhood cannot be achieved in this multi-religious world. So the democracy and religion are equally important.

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3 Jagdish Prasad Jain ''Fundamentals of Jainism'' Pub: Radiant publishers New Delhi;2005. Pp 145

- Nagshetty K. Shetkar,
Dravidian University. Kuppam.

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पंचपदी

सद्गुरु चिद्घन तुजला ।
आलों शरण मी तारी मजला ॥
जय गुरु जय गुरु जय गुरु जय ।
जय गुरु जय गुरु जय गुरु जय ॥धृ०॥
श्रुतिस्मृति तुजला गाती ।
परि ती आजवरी न होय पुरती ॥जय०॥१॥
शेष सहस्त्रमुखीं वर्णितां ।
परि ती आजवरी न होय पुरता ॥जय०॥२॥
पहा वागीश्वरी तुज स्तविती ।
परि ती आजवरी न होय पुरती ॥जय०॥३॥
संत सज्जनीं वर्णिलें बहू ।
ऐसा तूं एक देवाधिदेवू ॥जय०॥४॥
पाहूं जातां तुमचा अंत ।
न लगे म्हणुनी तुम्ही अनंत ॥जय०॥५॥
जाणुनी जे जन धरितील पंथ ।
ते ते झाले तव पदीं संत ॥जय०॥६॥
सचराचर तूं निर्मिता ।
सर्वांवरती तुमची सत्ता ॥जय०॥७॥
साधकाचे पुरवूनि कामा ।
तूंचि सहज करिसी निष्कामा ॥जय०॥८॥
या दासा तव पदीं प्रेमा ।
देऊनि करिसी मला उत्तमा ॥जय०॥९॥

TO THE
LORD OF THE LORDS

As an earnest supplicant have I come to Thee,
O Sadguru, the rock-solid minded one , save me.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,

The Scriptures sing in praise of Thee,
Yet the singing, even now continues to be.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,

Even the great thousand-hooded Shesha
Cannot complete singing in praise of Thee.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,

Shree Devi Vageeshvari sings in praise of Thee,
Yet Her singing, even now, continues to be.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,

Having praised Thee abundantly, the saints
and the virtuous,
Contented not, even to the day, O Lord of the lords,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,

Hast Thou neither the beginning nor the end
Thou art Ananta, (the infinity) - indeed.

Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya

Those who' ve come to know of Thee, followed Thy path
Sought refuge at Thy feet and attained sainthood O Lord.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya,

Thou the creator of the moving and the static
Thou governeth all,
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.

Fulfilling the wishes of the devotees,
Thou makest them O Lord, desire-free.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.

Granting me love at Thy aegis feet
Maketh me Thou, verily great.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.
Jayguru, Jayguru, Jayguru, Jaya.

Transcreated by :
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Book-review

Title of the book : The Spectrum of Consciousness
Author : Ken Wilber
Publisher : Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Delhi. 1st US Edition, 1977
Price : (Paperback) Rs. 250; (Cloth bound) Rs. 395.

In writing a review of this book for the Journal of the Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion (ACPR), it is felt that Sri. Gurudev Ranade's objective is fulfilled for it brings out a synthesis of what is called the Western and the Eastern Thought on Science, Philosophy, Religion and Spirituality. Ken Wilber is well-known for his open-mindedness and earned a name as one of the foremost scholars in the field of noetic studies. In his foreword John White says ‘The Spectrum of Consciousness is a unique approach to the study of human identity which synthesizes psychology, psychotherapy, mysticism and world religions. Using a concept drawn from physics- the electromagnetic spectrum- Wilber shows that human personality is a multilevel manifestation or expression of a single consciousness, just as the electromagnetic spectrum is a multi-banded expression of a single characterstic electromagnetic wave’’ (Foreword). Further, ‘‘ if one wants to know how he can reconcile the

Freudian imperative to strengthen the ego with the yogic or Buddhist admonition to transcend the ego, Wilber shows that these approaches can be understood to have equal validity, but only when the concept of pluridimensional consciousness is accepted. This work of Wilber aims well towards a Grand Unification Theory (GUT).'' [Foreword] Incidentally, there are a number of centers of study of Consciouness in the U.S.A., Australia, England and Canada pursuing the study of Consciousness from the view point of brain and its functions (psychosomatic). Most of these centers have eminent psychologists, psychoanalysts, neurosurgeons and physicians engaged in the study of cases of trauma, brain damage in accidents, and mentally retarded cases. But, none of them, except the London Center, has taken up a study of the ancient Indian scriptural studies such as Yoga and Meditation along with the modern scientific studies. Ken Wilber has constructed a band or ''Spectrum of Consciousness'' (also called perennial psychology) consisting of six major levels- the Shadow level at the one end and the Mind (Consciouness) level at the other. The Ego level, the Biosocial level, the Existential level and the Transpersonal bands are the four in-between. Wilber describes the nature of these levels, whose totality embraces the entire range of human experiences and when seen in its entirety, it is ''what there is and all there is, spaceless and therefore infinite, timeless, and therefore eternal, outside of which nothing exists.''These bands are the same as the one recognized by the Vedanta Philosophy, viz, matter, body, mind, ego, soul, and spirit (The Great Chain of Being- One Continuum). When one moves - either inward or outward, of the human body level of experience, it is termed as evolution ('movement away from spirit or unfolding of Maya' as in Anand Coomaraswamy, or 'growthback to spirit' as in Sri Aurobindo) or involution ('move away from spirit'),'getting lost and involved in Maya') or 'turning back towards spirit of consciousness' based on Ananda Coomaraswamy's concept. Here, it is finally Sri Aurobindo's descending and ascending consciousness that is adapted (as stated by the author) or simply Sri Ramana Maharshi's pure Consciousness in its different wave lengths or vibration. (See *Adventure of Consciousness* by Satprem, Aditi Publications, Mysore). What is strange about Wilber's thesis is that he uses the word 'Mind' throughout the text instead of Pure Consciousness. Despite his effort to keep track of it (the Mind) he often gets confused between Mind and Consciousness. It is no doubt that 'pure Mind is pure Consciousness'; however, he does not recognize the wide gap between the human mind and Pure Consciousness that can be bridged only by Trancendental Meditation (TM), sadhana, spiritual exercise. Thus, in the absence of a Guru and shaktipat, it is quite natural that one often gets confused and uses Mind in the place of Consciousness albeit, pure mind is pure consciousness. Only a spiritual seeker (sadhak) will realize the gap between Mind and Consciousness in Samadhi. Purity of the highest order is needed to reach the state of pure Consciousness and no one can reach that state here on earth; at best one can reach the state of the Buddha, a state of nihilism called 'nirvana', a mindless state (Shunya), but not become Mahavishnu, the Purnaprajnya. Sri Ramana Maharshi, an embodiment of Consciousness comes close to the state of the Buddha and almost exists in an exalted state as much as possible with his frail physical body on this earth. This awareness comes with a considerable progress and advancement in Sadhana. The Divine grace is very important here. But, it is human Mind, 'citta' that is blemished- full of desire, fear, attachment, and ultimately in intense vibration devoid *sat cit ananda*. The cause of human suffering as opined by Buddha is desire, clinging on to life, knowing full well that this physical body is *nashvara, anitya*. It is sheer ignorance, at that, *avidya!*

Further, Mind is in constant vibration and thus distorts the Reality. Duality is the other name for Mind. Pure Consciousness, and not Mind is the datum line. ''Mind is the world and the world is the mind''. Each Mind is a world by itself. The vibrating mind is the world and the still mind is the existential reality. But, one cannot exist at this single unitary level of consciousness, of still mind, except in a state of exalted consciousness of *Asamprajnya Samadhi. Yoga, asana, and pranayama, dhyana, mouna* are essential for the purpose of attaining the state of Unity Consciouness. But the psychotherapists or neurologists do not accept this reality and advise the materialist approach of drug therapy. Wilber constructs his theory in a very noetic way and aims at reconciliation, *samanvaya* between science, philosophy, religion and spirituality. In his eagarness to do so, he forgets the fact that a common man engaged in worldly pursuits cannot take to ascetic ways and realize the truth that *Prakruti* and *Purusha*, (the two ends-the Subject and the object) are the same. The *Upanishads* clearly demarcated - the one *Aranyakas*, as in the *Itiriya* and *Taittiriya Upanishads*, the *Brihadaranyaka*, and the *Mandukya* and *Mundaka* for the serious seekers and the *Brahmana (shatapatha)* and the *Chandogya* for the family man. Now, there are scientists who want to cut short the route to *Samadhi* by means of drugs, or electrodes connected to the brain! Thus the means are confused for the end. In Vedanta philosophy there is no beginning and end, there is no inside and outside, or there is no going in and coming out. It is just *'being'*, here now as the 'Be'-'ing' at rest. The human body, or any physical body for that matter, is only a covering that separates inside and outside, within and without, spiritual and the materialistic. This duality is a built-in mechanism of the Living Planet Earth. Anything that is made of Earth, the earthling, is basically of earth (minerals), water and fire in a gross state and comes within the force of gravity. To overcome the gravity is to rise to *akasha* and *mahat prajnya* state by Transcendental Meditation and this is not possible without spiritual exercises. All that Wilber talks about his theory of unitary consciousness without experiencing what it is to be at that exalted state even for a fraction of a second. This is evident from the elaborate study he has made and the quotations he has given from differnt scriptures. The great metaphysical traditions such as the Zen, the Yogacharya Buddhism, Vedanta Hiduism and Tibetan Vajrayana as well as the one set forth by Hubert Benoit are compared here. Wilber's theory is to unite the Western scientific and materialistic world with the Eastern spiritual world. But, the fact is that there is no West or East and the human Mind is the same anywhere in the world. Plato's Cave and Tennyson's experience quoted in the Text here are the pointers in this direction. Socrates, Schopenhauer and Spencer or Aldous Huxley are no exceptions. All great exalted minds have reached this state of unity consciousness and there is no way other than Transcendental Meditation to reach this state. Yoga is the way. Wilber accepts this proposition to reach this state and promotes this approach. He presents a diagram to show that all religions have a common base (in Mind) and gradually develop parallel to attain to the ultimate goal of emancipation. World religions run parallel just as Latitudes on earth appear to run parallel at the Equator only to unite at the Poles. Faith (in the Supreme Lord) and Hope (of Liberation) are the two Poles here. Two most important concepts presented here by Wilber are noteworthy. The Energy concept and the Here-Now concept- both are beautifully explained here. 'Energy is God'. 'Now-Here' is the Reality of existence, also God. There is nothing like time, space, causality since everything is *'Now'* and *'Here'* in the Present, Eternality; rather, it is nowhere and everywhere in reality. The Mind is the datum line, the basis of all experience. Everything takes its root in the thought particle, the quanta, Creation, sustenance, development and dissolution are the functions of a vibrating mind. The decision to 'become many' *(bahusyami)* from One *(Ekam, Eko'ham)* is in the Mind as a thought particle and the world instantaneously comes into existence with the thought-force vibrating with the quail- wave intensity, wave length and frequencies. But for the pulsation of the Mind there exists nothing here. "........" Such then is the mobilization and disintegration of my Energy, the evolution and involution of Brahman, a "play played eternally before all creatures" coming straight out of oidness and fading back into void, leaving no real tracks, no traces, a pathless play that comprises the creation-dissolution of the universe now ever, a creation-dissolution not of matter but of dualisms, the eternal rise-fall of the Spectrum of Consciousness, the simultaneous spontaneity of moment to moment that nevertheless remains always already this moment- for there is non other.It is all a matter of Energy and its dissipation. Conserve it in Silence *(mouna)*, Meditation *(dhyana)* and Contemplation in Solitude (*Samadhi)* and you have done it. Once you conquer the Mind you are the Lord of the universe, otherwise a slave of insatiable desires of the flesh.

Wilber has done extremely well in bringing together the Buddhist thought, the Chinese, the Vedanta way of life, and the Western psychology under one podium for discussion and has fairly succeeded in his attempt to convince the Western world that "the Vedanta way is the surest path to Liberation from all worldly ills." Wilber says, "The Vedanta psychology (philosophy?) is founded by the experimentally verifiable insight that the Brahman-Atman is the sole Reality, and the primary concern is to provide a pragmatic explanation as to "why" man fails to realize his basic and supreme identity with Brahman. In general, man's blind acceptance of dualisms and distinctions is the ignorance (*avidya*) that lands him squarely in a world of illusion (*maya*) and consequently in a world of suffering *(sansara)* round of birth and death." But, it is unfortunate that either he did not know about the *Brahma Sutras* or could not get a copy of its translation.

It is needless to go full length to dissect the whole Text here and suffices to point out the difficulties involved in making an ordinary worldly man to convince him of the illusion, or Maya and dissuade him from his mad pursuit of materialistic welfare disregarding the impending catastrophic disillusionment. No one is convinced of this truth despite the increasing number of cases of tragic end of many a rich and famous celebrities ending their lives with drugs and narcotics.

Before concluding this review, it is interesting to point out the nature of the Biosocial Bands described in Chapter VIII- ''The Great Filter''. The society, its 'mores' and the so-called civilization are a mask and every individual conceals his real nature by this mask: nobody wants to reveal his real nature and is afraid of his own true self. This is imbibed or inculcated in the members of the family and friends and this is the bane of the society. Nobody realizes the fact that his own thinking has made the physical world, the environment what it is. A drunkard staggering with his steps, for that matter, repeatedly hits a pole and curses the pole! This is the nature of our society. We frame rules and regulations, moral and ethical codes, only to break them. We create a fear complex in children and make them unfit to live a free life. We ask them to dream the impossible and face the real situation and the failure makes them a mental wreck. While referring to these remarks Wilber (pp. 226-230) has done well to reveal the futility of living for tomorrow " showing interest not in the cat (today) but the kitten's kittens" (tomorrow). We will conclude this review with an interesting episode quoted on page 149. '' A certain king went to Sri Shankaracharya to take some spiritual lessons and the learned sage taught him about illusory nature of this world and the futility of material acquisitions, name, fame, wealth, and kingship. The king wanted to test his Guru and ordered his servants to make a wild tusker cross his road and he watched the reaction carefully in hiding. Naturally, instinctively, Shankara on seeing the charging tusker climbed a tree and saved himself. Later on, when Shankara reached the palace the king asked him, ''Revered Sir, if the world is an illusion, what made you run with fear and climb a tree when your illusory elephant came charging at you?'' Shankara explained, '' Indeed in highest truth, the elephant is non-real and illusory. Nevertheless, you and I are non-real as that elephant. Only your ignorance, clouding the truth with this spectacle of non-real phenomenality, made your Highness see illusory me go up a non-real tree. [quoted on p. 149 taken from Henrich Zimmer : *Philosophies of India,* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951, p. 20]. Indeed, the universe exists exactly as we perceive it (where sense and sensibility are still non-dual), but not extended in space and time. '' Seeing! Seeing! Seeing'' said Ru Ph. Mob.: 99803 85850. Resi. : 2442 077mi. And it is this ''Seeing''- before we divide it into the seer and the seen- this non-dual ''apperception'' that James declares a reality itself- it is THIS that we are to discover. (p. 149). It is said that when Buddha was asked how he felt after Enlightenment, he said, ''I just forgot about my body, my physical existence.'' It is this forgetfulness of the physical entity all the time that is the reality of existence. Thanks to the Publishers Messrs. Motilal Banarasidass, masters in publications of Indic studies for giving its readers such a beautiful book. It definitely enlightens a clouded mind as to the reality of existence. The Paperback Edition is moderately priced and every seeker of truth should possess this on hand for ready reference. The book contains a number of elaborate quotations from Upanishads and Buddhist Texts and has nice illustrations of the Spectrum of Consciousness that enhances the value of the book.

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☐

Heaven in its rapture dreams of perfect earth,
Earth in its sorrow dreams of perfect heaven.

- Sri Aurobindo in Savitri, p. 684.

* * *

Ego is edging God out. Whenever God gives us problems, it is to humble us and not to tumble us. All difficulties are a divine surgery.

There are four levels of energy - Ordinary energy, emergency energy, motivational energy and finally divine energy. Normally people get exhausted after using emergency energy. I motivate them to draw on their energy by taking them to such planes with meditations.'

-Swami Sri Subodhananda.

* * *

He who walks in tune with the rhythm of life is never weary.

- Mahatma Gandhi.

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ACTIVITIES OF
A. C. P. R.

During
January-March, 2010

1. On 20-3-2010 a Meet on 'HOLISTIC PROFESSIONALISM IN EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING' was held in ACPR's Gurudev Ranade Mandir Auditorium. The function began with devotional songs sung by Miss Sonali and Miss Nidhi of Uma Sangeeta Academy of Belgaum. Miss Vidya Zirali rendered an invocation song. Advocate Mr. M. B. Zirali, Trustee and Secretary of ACPR welcomed and introduced the guests. Dr. D. H. Rao, M.E., M.S., Ph.D. (Canada), M.B.A., Ph.D. (U.S.A.), Director, Jain Group of Institutions made

Inauguration of the function by the Chief Guest
Shri. C. M. Shirol, I.A.S., Regional Commissioner, Belgaum Division.

a power point presentation on the subject. It was an insightful and inspiring lecture substantiated by relevant examples. He remarked, 'he who loves and performs the assigned task sincerely and efficiently without anybody's assistance is a true holistic professionalist'.

Mr. C. M. Shirol, I.A.S., Regional Commissioner, Belgaum Division, presided over the function. Adv. Mr. Ashok M. Potdar, Trustee and Vice Chairman graced the occasion. Mr. Subramanyam Bhat proposed a vote of thanks

The Programme was concluded with Vande Mataram by Mr. Rajani.

Prof. Dr. R. M. Marathe and Prof. Dr. Madhumati M. Kulkarni anchored the function.

Several govt. officials and teachers were also present.

2. Hon'ble Minister for Major irrigation and in-charge Minister for Belgaum District,Shri. Basavraj Bommai, Dr. J. Ravishankar, Dy. Commissioner, Dist. Magistrate, Belgaum, Dr. Ekroop Kaur, C.E.O., Z. P. Belgaum visited ACPR's Gurudev Ranade Mandir on 23-03-2010. They were all impressed by the serenity and ambience of the premises. They expressed their satisfaction over the functioning of the institution. Adv. M. B. Zirali, ACPR's Trustee and Secretary submitted a note appealing for complete renovation of the premises alongwith construction of a digital Library and meditation hall open for people belonging to all religions. Hon'ble Minister responded positively and assured that steps would be taken

A visit of Hon'ble Minister Sri. Basavraj Bommai and other dignitaries.

towards renovation. Mr. Ashok Potdar, Mr. Aigali and Mr. Subramanya Bhat, members of the Board of Trustees were also present.

Belgaum.
31-03-2010

Advocate **M. B. Zirali,**
Trustee & Secretary, ACPR.

ACPR's
DEVELOPMENTAL PLANS

I. ACPR's INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE IN COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

(a) Research wing for Empirical Dynamics (b) Wing for Data Collection.

(c) Wing for Data Processing. (d) Wing for inferential co-ordination.
(e) Textual Research wing (f) Library.

II. ACPR's INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR AFFILIATION AND COLLABORATION

Active representation and working presence of the internationally reputed Organisation in the field of Research in Philosophy and Religion, Sociology, and the growing trends of studies in Theo-polity. Apart from updating the activities, the Collaborations will ensure the result oriented activities.

III. ACPR's CYBER INFORMATION CENTRE FOR MAJOR RELIGIONS / FAITHS OF THE WORLD.

To be projected throughout modern Audio-visual/Intel modes and devices and also supported by models, sculpture, architectural representations, textual-ritual other data. It is proposed to be developed as Visuals /Textual 'Model-Centre' of Information about the performing religions / faiths.

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b) School for refreshing re-orientation to be modelled as a training center for Academicians, Legislators, Administrators, Leaders / Intellectual spokesmen of the Society.

c) Special centre for rural awareness.

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b. Hostels for research students.

c. Guest House.

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VIII. CO-ORDINATING ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS

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- Prof. N. R. Deshpande

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